



Administrative Policies and Procedures: 16.9

Subject:	Outings and Overnight Stays
Authority:	TCA 37-5-106
Standards:	DCS 6-510 C and 6-512
Application:	To All Regional Field Staff and Resource Parents

Policy Statement:

Resource parents are, by virtue of their approval to care for children in state custody, expected to make sound judgments regarding the day-to-day activities of children in their care. A resource parent may approve short outings and overnight stays with friends of the child/youth and/or family and friends of the resource parents.

Purpose:

DCS supports children maintaining past connections and building new attachments and wants to give flexibility for typical, short outings and/or overnight stays to be arranged by the family where the child is placed as a way to maximize a child's sense of normalcy when they must be separated from their birth family.

Procedures:

A. Outings and Overnight Stays Defined	Outings and overnight stays, for the purpose of this policy, will be defined as a child or resource parent initiated, in-state, outing of less than 48 hours, to a location well known to the resource parents, and that the resource parents can ensure appropriate supervision will be provided. This is not intended and must in no way be confused with visitation between a custodial child and their Family Service Worker (FSW) , birth parent, or as described in other policies.
B. Notice of Outings and Overnight Stays	<ol style="list-style-type: none">Although resource parents may authorize short outings and overnight stays for children placed in their care, the FSW should be notified of the child's location if the outing exceeds four (4) or five (5) hours.Details given about the outings or overnight stays must include:<ol style="list-style-type: none">The name of the caregiver who will be responsible for the child;The location of the child's visit;A telephone number where the child can be reached in an emergency; andThe date of the child's outing, if it is expected to exceed 24 hours.

	3. The details of the outings and/or overnight stays may be given verbally and may be given on short notice; however, a minimum 24-hour advance communication with the department is preferred, when possible.
C. Rules for Outings and Overnight Stays	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Any court required authorizations must be honored. For example, some children, who are adjudicated unruly or delinquent, may require court approval to leave the direct supervision of the designated caregiver.2. The FSW must inform resource parents of any contact restrictions set by either the court or the department.3. Any out-of-state trip, not pre-authorized by the Regional Administrator, requires advanced DCS authorization and completion of form CS-0679, <i>Authorization for Resource Parents to Travel out of State with a Custodial Child.</i>
D. Consideration for Outings and Overnight Stays	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Resource parents may always consult with the child's FSW if they are unsure about giving permission for an outing or overnight stay.2. DCS cannot pay any individual for providing supervision or care for a custodial child for the purpose of an outing or overnight stay.

Forms:	<u>CS-0679 - Authorization for Resource Parents to Travel out of State/out of country with a Custodial Child</u>
Collateral Documents:	None